



The Way Things Are



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Chapter 1 by Elisabeth Ford

The clock ticked away steadily but ever so slowly. Why couldn't it just move faster? Noon seemed ever so long away and his stomach was already rumbling.

He pressed his forehead into the palm of his hand, looking tiredly at his desk.

Idly, he began to draw a picture of a soldier, drowning out the drone of his teachers voice.

He was interrupted by a kick to the shin, which caused him to grimace and then glare at the culprit his friend, Alec.

"What?" he whispered angrily, his shin throbbing. He reached down to try to rub the pain away.

"She asked you a question," reported Alec in a whisper.

He looked up at the older woman who was their mathematics teacher.

For that matter, she was the teacher for all of their subjects since the war begun. He was so sick of that stupid classroom, and it's unadorned, wooden, paneled wall's. Why did he have to go to school anyhow?

It was boring except for when the bombs began to drop.

Then it was exciting, rushing to the air-raid shelters, gas masks in hand.

He loved to watch the bombs go off, the flames ripping through buildings, creating quiet the scene at night.

His mum, of course always spoiled him in their own shelter for the night.

"Damien Smith, are you listening?" she said, her a deep frown on her lips.

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"This is the second time today in one class that you've gone off in your daydreams. When will you learn to-"

"Do what i'm told," he muttered, saying the words along with his teacher, annoying her further.

"I know, I know." That's all anyone seemed to ask him.

He rested his chin on the palm of his hand, his eyes on the clock, watching as the second hand clicked.

It seemed as if the second hand was mocking him, moving slower than usual.

This was going to be a long day.

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